

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to the amendments filed December 9 and the supplemental amendments filed December 18, 2008. In the instant amendment, claims 1 and 18 have been amended, and further being amended as noted below.
2. Claims 1 and 4-18 have been examined, and all remained pending claims now are being allowed (renumbered 1-16).

Examiner's Amendments

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
4. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Wallace, Registration No. 48,909, on February 19, 2009, to obviate any potential 35 USC 112, second paragraph, issues and to put the claims in condition for allowance.

IN THE CLAIMS: Claims 1 and 18 are being amended as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended),

- Line 5, before "performing" adding - -simultaneously- -;
- Line 11, replacing "identified" by - -identified- -; and
- Line 12, replacing "identified" by - -identified- -.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended),

- Line 6, before "performing" adding - -simultaneously- -;
- Line 12, replacing "identified" by - -identified- -; and
- Line 13, replacing "identified" by - -identified- -.

- o - o - o -

Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

5. As Applicants pointed out in the Remarks, the prior art of record (Lau) does not disclose and/or fairly suggest at least claimed limitations in independent claim 1 *"...performing an alignment and generalization of the plurality of steps, procedure wherein the alignment of the plurality of steps identifies a set of steps in the plurality of steps that are equivalent once generalized, and*

wherein the generalization of the plurality of steps predicts differences between individual steps belonging to the identified set of steps in the plurality of steps and determines that the identified set of steps perform a distinct action in the procedure" and similarly recited in such manners in independent claim 18 (Remarks filed December 9 and 18, 2008).

These claimed limitations are not present in the prior art of record and would not have been obvious, thus all pending claims are allowed.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to examiner Thuy Dao (Twee), whose telephone/fax numbers are (571) 272 8570 and (571) 273 8570, respectively. The examiner can normally be reached on every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 6:00AM to 6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tuan Q. Dam, can be reached at (571) 272 3695.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273 8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature of relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the TC 2100 Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272 2100.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR

Art Unit: 2192

only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Thuy Dao/

Examiner, Art Unit 2192

/Tuan Q. Dam/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2192